

**TESTIMONY OF
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BRIDGEPORT HOSPITAL
SUBMITTED TO THE
PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE
Friday, February 27, 2009**

**SB 228, An Act Concerning a Personal Health Income Tax Deduction for Individuals who
Receive all Health Screenings as Recommended by the American Medical Association**

My name is Carolyn Salsgiver. I am the Senior Vice President, Planning and Marketing, for Bridgeport Hospital. I am pleased to submit testimony today in support of **SB 228, An Act Concerning a Personal Health Income Tax Deduction for Individuals who Receive all Health Screenings as Recommended by the American Medical Association**

SB 228 would provide a personal income tax deduction from adjusted gross income to any individual who receives all age appropriate health screenings and tests as recommended by the American Medical Association. This is a very creative and innovative bill to provide positive incentives for health screening and prevention. It is estimated that 95% of Americans' health care dollars are spent on treating diseases after they have occurred. And yet, the cost of treatment for many diseases could be reduced by as much as 90% through preventive care, including regular screenings. The top five diseases - heart disease, diabetes, prostate cancer, breast cancer and obesity - account for three-quarters of all health care costs. If we can prevent or detect just 25% of the cases of these diseases, Connecticut alone could save \$6 billion in health care costs. For a family with average annual health care costs of \$3,000, that amounts to a \$150 savings per year. Thus, any incentives to keep people healthier would save the state money.

One change I would suggest to the bill is to not limit the guidelines used to that of only the American Medical Association (AMA). There are many medical organizations that publish guidelines related to health screenings and preventative behaviors. The American College of Physicians is another example of an organization with guidelines. It may be good to compare and contrast the guidelines from numerous medical associations to identify the most relevant ones before adopting specific ones from the AMA.

I urge you to support SB 228. It will save our state money over the long term.

Thank you for your consideration of our position on this important matter.